



384 Main Street
Burlington, VT 05401

House Ways and Means Committee
Montpelier, VT 05633

Monday, April 21, 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the hundreds of current and alumnae sisters of the Alpha Chi Omega chapter at the University of Vermont, we would greatly appreciate the Committee taking the time to review additional facts prior to discussing Proposition S.221, which will impose an unmanageable tax burden on our organization and effectively close our chapter. We aim to inform the Committee about the nature of our affiliation with the University, including charitable contributions to both the surrounding community and national advocacy groups. Also, perhaps most notably, we would like to share a bit about our legacy, history and home of 93 years in Burlington, VT.

Alpha Chi Omega was established to support the advancement of intellectual, social and moral culture of its members. As an organization that first and foremost maintains our residence at 384 Main Street, for the "sole purpose of providing student housing to our members for educational purposes", we take great pride in providing our members a quiet and comfortable place to achieve academic excellence. This residence is not only a quiet place to study and meet with academic advisors for those twenty members that live in-house, but is actively used by all members.

Since, 1921 Alpha Chi Omega sisters have served over 200,000 volunteer hours to the University and to the Burlington community. In fact one of the pillars of our charter is a requirement that each sister fulfills a minimum of twenty community service hours per academic year. In 1992, Alpha Chi Omega adopted domestic violence awareness as our national cause and every year since our sisters have held fundraisers, led clothing and supply drives and dedicated significant personal time. For many years we partnered with local organizations to raise money to support the search for a cure to Cystic Fibrosis, with the main fundraising efforts taking place at our chapter house. As members of the University community we have consistently volunteered on campus and with local organizations by assisting with freshman move in, being active in student government, and helping local organizations such as after school programs and soup kitchens.

Proposition S. 221 threatens to take away our home, as well as the homes of other fraternities and sororities, which will have a lasting effect on the University. If our house loses the current property tax exemption, then given the current tax

assessment of \$1,217,500 we would be required to pay roughly \$18,799 in property taxes annually. The unfortunate result would not simply be financial distress to the chapter or hardship for a period of time, but rather an immediate need for us to sell the property to avoid delinquency, which would certainly end the future of Alpha Chi Omega and likely end other similar organizations at the University of Vermont. Furthermore, if such an event should transpire, we believe the most likely entity to purchase the property would be the University itself, thus negating any benefit the State hopes to achieve by lifting the tax exemption.

We would like to thank the Committee for taking the time to review these facts and for the consideration given to our many members.

Regards,

Olivia Wren,
Laura Fiacco,
Ashlynn Majewski,
Samantha Hampton,
Sarah Bloom,
KC Bruch,
Sarah Shaffer,
Lauren Morrow,
Brianna Farmiloe,
Melissa Brenner,
Caitlin Stroili,
Jessamyn Bart,
Tori Schryver,
Darby Ludington,
Lauren Webber,
Megan Kelly,
Amanda MacNamara,
Sophia Sullivan,
Alexandra Carrick,
Nora Houseknecht,
Emily Chamberlin,
Jessica Mulveny,
Eliza Daeschler,
Dana Knopp,
Jackie Harris,
Katie Bishop,
Savannah Smith,
Lindsey Majoros,
Marissa Massimore,
Lindsay Jackson,
Rachel Kayser,

Natalie Dorfneilson,
Shannon Lozito,
Jen Whitman,
Jaden Dickinson,
Carly Davis,
Carrie Smallwood,
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Sarah Yandow,
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Molly Mollica,
Jessica Mulveny,
Tori Hegarty,
Danielle Francis,
Jenna Grossman,
Allie Kohut,

Karly Acker,
Emily Styles,
Swati G. Olebe,
Ryan Marie Killooy,
Marisa Nack ,
Helen Weaver,
Sydney Sifers,
Joy Katz Goncalves,
Dana Aussenberg,
Andrea Thomas,
Whitney Wall,
Adriana Blacker,
Hallie Saunders,
Arden Clapp,
Emily Sandor,
Alyssa Percival,
Leah Mansback,
Lindsay Rattigan,
Katri Hunter,
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Betsy Bartosiak,
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Lindsay Redman,

Lauren Karwoski,
Alissa Minehart,
Shibevahna Devost,
Anne Gvazdauskas

On behalf of:
The Sisters of Alpha Chi Omega
Alpha Iota Chapter, University of Vermont